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Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20554

MAY 1 - 1991

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

DUPLICATE

In re)
UHURU COMMUNICATIONS, INC.) File No. BRH-910130WF
For Renewal of the License of WUCI(FM), Binghamton, New York	; }

To: Chief, Mass Media Bureau

PETITION TO DENY

David A. Martin, by his attorneys and pursuant to Section 309(d) of the Communications Act and Section 73.3584 of the Commission's Rules, hereby petitions to deny the above-captioned application of Uhuru Communications, Inc. ("Uhuru") for renewal of the license of WUIC-FM, a non-commercial radio station assigned to Binghamton, New York. Uhuru has not been fulfilling its public interest obligations for almost a year in that its radio station has not operated since at least June 1, 1990 and Uhuru does not maintain a local studio, phone number or indeed any local presence in violation of the Commission's rules and a licensee's obligation to broadcast in the public interest.

I. STANDING

Mr. Martin is a "party-in-interest" within the meaning of 47 U.S.C. § 309(d)(1) and has standing to submit this Petition because he is a listener of the station and resides within its service area. See United Church of Christ v. FCC, 359 F. 2d 994 (D.C. Cir. 1966); Petitions to Deny, 82 FCC 2d 89, 98-99 (1980). Accord RKO General, 1 FCC 2d 1081, 1082 ¶ 7 (1986). See also, the

attached declaration of Mr. Martin at \P 1 (hereinafter, Martin decl. at).

II. FACTS

WUCI has been in a state of turmoil for several years marred by unfavorable publicity as ownership disputes over this non-commercial station have hampered its operation. These disputes and the apparent inability of the current licensee to properly manage this facility have resulted in the station being off of the air since at least June 1, 1990. While the licensee has reported to the Commission that its station has been off of the air, Uhuru has not informed the Commission that it has no real prospect of providing a local radio service to the area. All or virtually all of its broadcasting equipment has been sold by the local sheriff to satisfy debts and Uhuru does not maintain a local studio or even offer a local phone number for the public to call. In short, Uhuru has not been fulfilling its responsibilities as a broadcaster and apparently is not qualified to do so in the future. The Commission should revoke Uhuru's license.

A published report from the June 6, 1990 edition of the <u>Press</u> & <u>Sun-Bulletin</u>, a local newspaper, reported that it was unlikely that WUCI would ever resume broadcast operations after several years of financial and internal struggles. The article reported that authorities repossessed thousands of dollars worth of equipment from the stations's Binghamton Headquarters and that the Board was meeting to determine whether to continue operating the station. On June 8, 1990 with knowledge that it had no real

prospect for operating, given the recent repossession of its equipment, Uhuru wrote the Commission reporting that "due to circumstances beyond our control" "we have temporarily discontinued operations as of June 1, 1990." See attachment B, a letter from Dr. Martin Schulman to the Commission dated June 8, 1990. On June 22, 1990, the licensee informed the Commission that "we expect to be off the air for over 30 days". See attachment C, a letter from Dr. Schumlman to the Commission dated June 22, 1990.

Even before WUCI's problems culminated in the seizure of its broadcasting equipment in June 1990, the petitioner, David Martin, approached WUCI to purchase air time on the station for the purpose of providing local programming. The directors of Uhuru showed no interest in this proposal and did not even bother to contact Mr. Martin. See Martin decl at ¶ 4.

After the station ceased operating in June 1990, Mr. Martin again approached the directors seeking to acquire the station. This offer was rejected out-of-hand and Uhuru would not even discuss the matter further with him. Finally in the fall of 1990 Mr. Martin attempted on several occasions to contact Uhuru again seeking to purchase air-time and again, Uhuru rejected any effort to enable this station to resume operations. See Martin decl at ¶¶ 5-6.

Moreover, it is clear that Uhuru has not otherwise been fulfilling its public interest responsibilities. There is no main studio and no local telephone number for the listening public to visit or contact. See Martin decl at ¶ 7.

In short, WUCI-FM has literally disappeared from view; it

offers no programming, no studio and does not even bother to offer a local telephone number, a local non-commercial radio station that has completely ceased functioning.

III. UHURU'S RENEWAL APPLICATION SHOULD BE DENIED

Truthfulness in dealing with the Commission is a fundamental perquisite to holding a license. Character Policy Statement, 102 FCC 2d 1179, 1188-1191 (1986). Even the most insignificant misrepresentations can disqualify an applicant from holding an FCC license. FCC v. WOKO, 329 U.S. 223 (1946). The disqualifying misrepresentation can take the form of false statements of fact or "concealment, evasion, and other failures to be fully informative." Fox River Broadcasting, Inc., 93 FCC 2d 127, 129 (1983).

UHURU's has displayed a lack of candor similar to that of the licensee in KOED, Inc., 3 FCC Rcd 2821 (Rev. Bd. 1988), review denied, 5 FCC Rcd 1784 (1990), recon. of denial of review denied, 68 R.R.2d 1784 (1991). In that case, a licensee's application for renewal was denied because the licensee failed to truthfully notify the Commission of the reason it deactivated its station and went off the air. There the applicant complained of equipment problems and requested STA's without disclosing it lacked the financial means to operate the station. The Commission upheld the Review Board's conclusion that this lack of candor disqualified the renewal applicant from continuing as a Commission licensee. Similarly, the record in this case is quite clear that Uhuru has not disclosed that it lacks the means to operate its radio station. Its equipment has been seized and there is no meaningful prospect

that WUCI can renew broadcasting . WUCI has not disclosed this state of affairs and its renewal application should be rejected for this reason alone.

UHURU's application for renewal also should be denied because of its failure to comply with Commission rules. Although UHURU has informed the Commission that it was temporarily suspending operation, the facts indicate that UHURU simply ceased operating without any meaningful prospect or resuming operations. In essence, UHURU was really discontinuing its operation on a permanent basis. Accordingly, it was required to comply with Section 73.1750 of the Commission's rules, which requires licensees to notify the FCC of permanent discontinuance of operation and forward its license for cancellation. 47 C.F.R. 73.1750. Moreover, Uhuru has failed to maintain a local studio or even a local telephone number in violation of 47 C.F.R. 73.1125(c). For these rule violations, WUCI's license renewal application should be denied.

Finally, WUCI's prolonged failure to operate its station eliminates any renewal expectancy to which it might otherwise be entitled. In <u>Seattle Public Schools</u>, 65 R.R.2d 1621 (Rev. Bd. 1989), the Review Board implicitly held that when a noncommercial educational station has had a "severely truncated operating schedule," that fact impacts the issue of a licensee's overall service to its community and is relevant in computing the licensee's renewal expectancy. <u>Id</u>. at 1634 n. 36. In that case, the Review Board was considering a licensee that had maintained a minimal operating schedule. In the case of WUCI, which has gone

completely off the air, there can be no renewal expectancy.

Allowing WUCI to continue as a Commission licensee in light of the present circumstances would contravene the public interest by depriving the Binghamton community of this service. As the Commission stated in the KQEC-TV case, "to allow the channel to lie fallow any longer would be an egregious disservice to the public." 57 FCC 2d at 269. Particularly when the nation's spectrum shortage has become so acute, a licensee who is not making any use, let alone efficient use, of the frequency on which it is authorized to operate, should not have its license renewed. See, Changes in the Rules Relating to Noncommercial Educational FM Broadcast Stations, 69 FCC 2d 240, 251-256 (1978) (imposing minimum operating schedules on noncommercial educational licensees in order to ensure efficient use of the spectrum); 47 C.F.R. § 73.561.

There is at least one entity that is qualified to bring this radio station back on the air and fulfill the public interest obligations of a non-commercial license (see Martin declaration at ¶8). For this reason, Martin respectfully requests that the Commission deny the application of WUCI for renewal or in the alternative designate appropriate issues to determine whether WUCI has complied with its obligations as a licensee and whether WUCI in

the future has the requisite qualifications to be a Commission licensee.

Respectfully submitted,

Bv:

William H. Crispin Jacqueline R. Kinney

VERNER, LIIPFERT, BERNHARD, McPHERSON & HAND, CHARTERED 901 15th Street, N.W. Suite 700

Washington, D.C. 20005

Attorneys for Arrowhead Ministries, Inc.

Dated: May 1, 1991

DECLARATION

- I, David A. Martin, subject to the penalties for perjury, do declare as follows:
- 1. I am the Executive Director of Arrowhead Ministries, Inc., a non-profit, 501-(c)-3, corporation with offices at 308 Harry L. Drive, Johnson City, New York 13790. Johnson City is located immediately adjacent to Binghamton, New York within the service area of the Binghamton radio stations including specifically WUCI-FM, a non-commercial radio station serving Binghamton on 91.5 MHz.
- 2. Until about a year ago, I would regularly listen to this radio station. The station apparently has been plagued with financial and ownership problems and disputes for the past several years. Our local newspapers have carried a number of stories about these matters. A number of articles appeared in our local newspapers in early 1988 detailing disputes between various "boards" claiming control of the licensed facilities.
- 3. These disputes caused the station to be off the air on a number of occasions beginning in 1988. According to a published report, WUCI's broadcast equipment was seized in June 1990 by the local sheriff to satisfy outstanding obligations and the station went off of the air at that time, and to my knowledge, has never since broadcast. Enclosed is an article from a local newspaper, the Press and Sun-Bulletin, dated June 6, 1990, which I read at the time.
- 4. Before the station permanently went off the air, I approached the Board of Directors of Uhuru Communications, Inc. in the early part of 1990 for the purpose of purchasing air-time because I am a strong believer in the contribution that non-commercial radio can make to the local community. I personally met with the directors; discussed various programs I was interested in airing; and specifically asked to purchase time on the station. The directors informed me that I would be hearing from them but in fact they did not contact me any further in this regard.
- 5. In the fall of 1990, when the station had gone dark, I again approached the board of directors with a formal presentation to purchase any equipment they still had and service the station's outstanding debt. My purpose was to acquire, subject to FCC approval, the license for the station. My offer was rejected out of hand and in fact the board refused to even consider my offer and, of course, did not offer any counter-proposal other than that they would accept a sizeable donation from me and continue to own and operate the facility. I was informed that they had no interest in selling the station and that they would simply let the station remain off of the air until and unless they were able

to make arrangements themselves to make the station operational again.

- 6. Since this occurrence I have called Gladys Cordeaux, the acting president of the licensee, seeking to either buy programming or the station. I have had no response to my offers.
- 7. There is no office for the radio station at the address listed in the phone book, 56 Whitney Avenue, Binghamton and my calls to the phone number listed in the phone book have also been unsuccessful since there is a recorded phone message saying this phone number has been disconnected. Thus, to my knowledge there is no way for the public to reasonably contact the ownership or management of the radio station. It is my understanding that there is no meaningful broadcast equipment for this station and that all or most of it has been seized by the local sheriff's office and sold at auction.
- 8. I am filing the petition to deny and the group that I am associated with, Arrowhead Ministries, Inc., will file a competing application for WUCI in order to bring back this local radio station to our community.

Dated: <u>May 1-4 /59/</u>

DAVID A. MARTIN

Elicanor Billiamonio

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be held on campus in ege officials said.
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WSKG exploring possibility

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wk in quality control a ecialist for USA Today i list at Rochester

Executives from WEXC public radio and television have discussed operating alternatives for WUCI-PM with Askinba A. Taria founding practices and chief executive officer of Unart, and members of Unarty rival

traing community news, Replies W. Spero ad 6 p.m. it 798-1151. or comments?

WUCI is Uhera Communications' flass-cially sampped radio station.

owned production company on just and public affairs.

broadcast grant," WEEG. President Mb. - Public Telecommunications Pacifities chael Ziegler said the other day. "Those gram, declined to specify the nath discussions have focused on how WEEG those discussions. A grant from the familiar help to sesure the continuation of program point the loon's share of this source of alternative broadcasting.

PM's equipment start-up costs.

But Anderson, who works for the federal

Contacted at her W

Money woes quiet WUCI

By ROQUA MONTEZ IV Staff Writer

WUCI-FM radio's board of directors met Tuesday to consider whether the station, long wracked by financial and internal struggles, would ever broadcast again.

The 4-year-old radio station ceased broadcasting late Friday after authorities repossessed thousands of dollars worth of equipment from the station's Binghamton headquarters.

The equipment, which ranged from turntables to speakers to office furniture, was repossessed for "non-payment of debt," said Martin Schulman, acting president of the station's board of directors.

"It's all a big 'I don't know,"
Schulman told the board and several
staff members at station headquarters,
56 Whitney Ave. "I really think that
we're going to have to get some professional advice on some very sticky

problems."

Perhaps the stickiest problem at the non-profit, all-volunteer station is its financial affairs. An unnamed creditor placed a lien on the station because it apparently owed \$8,218.74. Annual interest boosted the amount to \$10.438.79. Schulman said.

The broadcast and sound equipment taken from the station is in the custody of the Broome County Sheriff's Department and is scheduled to be auctioned to pay off the debt. A date for the auction has not been set. Schulman said.

Several disc jockeys attended Tuesday's meeting but they received no concrete answers to key questions on whether the station would ever broadcast again. Instead, the disc jockeys were told they would receive word on the station's fate in the upcoming weeks.

Ashimba A. Tariq, founder of one of the country's few minority-owned

radio stations and its former chief executive officer, attended the meeting but 'declined to comment, saying he wanted to hear more from the board before making an assessment.

apparently owed \$8,218.74. Annual interest boosted the amount to \$10,438.79. Schulman said.

The broadcast and sound equipment taken from the station is in the custody of the Broome County Sher-

One of the longest periods the station stopped broadcasting was in June 1988 when its power was cut for 11 days because the station was delinquent in its payment of a utility bill. A fund-raiser and a \$500 donation from the Elks Club helped to pay the bill and allowed the station to resume broadcasting.

The station's early history was been marked with internal power struggles that pitted various local factions against one other for control of the station.

Kark to run for Legislature

By KAREN LANGE Staff Writer

A Port Crane Republican who has twice lost attempts to regain the



and started to make investments, she said.

In 1973, as president of the old Broome County Taxpayers Associa-



for fiscal problems President blamed Dissent

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"Now we have to take time out to get the ard shustion streight," he said. "It's pre Communications inc. yersus an ille-

By E.J. CONZOLA H Staff Writer

Joanne M. Novak won the first set yesterday in her effort to re main the Democratic candidate for Binghamton City Court judge, but Republican officials may still try for match point in the courts.

Broome County elections of stoners Robert 5. Rose and Gregory A. Gates ruled yesterday that they did not have the authority to determine if Novak's residence is 18 Lourdes Road, as stated on designated petitions filed last month with the elections board. The quetion of residency was raised in a challenge filed by Binghamton law-yer Richard J. Grace, who contended the Lourdes Road home was not Novak's residence as defined by state elections law.

The commissioners are not empowered by law to determine "sub-stantial questions of fact" and the petitions are "facially valid," they

Had the challenge proven concluively that Novak does not reside at a Lourdes Road, the commission-

evidence presented at hearing did not meet that criteria, he said.

The written opinion stressed the "limited nature" of the commissioners' authority, and said the questions raised by the challenge to Novak's petitions should be settled by de courts.

Grace said last night that he had not decided whether to pursue his objections in the courts. "I just don't know," he said, adding he will make a decision today

The commissioners' apparent behef that 18 Lourdes Road does not meet the legal requirements as No-vak's residence will play a part in the decision, Grace said. "We are not persuaded 18 Lourdes Road constitutes Mrs. Novak's residence within the meaning of the election law," Rose and Gates wrote in their

The ruling came approximately we hours after a four-hour hearing. on Grace's objections. Grace, through the testimony of the owner of 18 Lourdes Road, attempted to w-that Novak did not reside at that address on the day petitions were filed, nor did she intend to re-

side at that address as required by state elections law

Novak and her husband contracted to buy the property and moved some of their belongings to the address through an agreement that allowed them to take posses-sion of the house before the sale was completed. The Novaks later withdrew from the contract, but continued to rent the property, said Mark J. Konnick, the owner of 18 Lourdes Road.

She is challenging the incumbent, Republican John T. Hillis, for



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- elivenes Tee Ley-Away Plan For Your
- Convenience
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 Creative Financing
 Englusive Lifetime Limited

Werranty
Free Delivery Within 100 Mile
Reduse

The Coury Comforter... true you with a warm feeling

14 34 Mais Si 797-5440



MANAGEMENT

Tariq faces dissent-

ed from Page 13 negligence. They was to use me as a scapegoet. But I have no intention of resigning, especially as founder of this program. I have no intention of surning this program over to peo-ple with interior motives."

Meanwhile, the dissidents say their only motive is saving the sta-

Tario acknowledged yesterday that he had not called a board meeting in almost two years, although Uhuru's bylaws require quarterly meetings. But, he added, neither did the board members ask him why the group wasn't meeting.

Instead, the mixed group of some old and new board members tried to fire Tariq Tuesday, night.

Louis D. Ramos II, a relatively new member of the board recognized by Tariq, said yesterday, "Fred Smith said last night be rants to become president of the corporation.

Frederick E. Smith Sr. of 11 Pratt Court, Binghamton, is variously de-scribed as WUCI's would-be savior or a willful subversive whose real purpose is taking control of Uhuru.

Tariq charged that Smith and the dissident board are in conflict with Ulturn's bylaws, and Smith refused yesterday to discuss how the new board was constituted or specify the number of members now serving on the board.

After initiating contact with a reporter and promising to call the redicott lawyer Joseph Slusar teletone the reporter yesterday af-

the Ulturn board, and the board is considering litigation. He wouldn't the wouldn't have why or against whom the litigation would be mounted.

Smith said he wouldn't-discuss how he had become a member of the Unitra board.

Ashimba his been calling the shots until now, but he's been fixed by the board," Smith said.

Smith also said his board decided

ir will speak only as a group.

However, Michael G. Taylor of 86.

Burr Ave., Binghamton, did speak with a reporter yesterday afternoon. Taylor, a veteran Uhuru staffer, is a member of the board aligned with Smith;

We are reorganizing to go forward and to straighten our some of the financial problems," Taylor said. "We want to retain the station's credibility, raise money and save the station.

Taylor also said Tariq appointed mith to the Uhuru board, which Tariq demed.

Both sides in the conflict said the courts may have to determine which board can speak for Uhuru Communications. In the meantime, WUCI will continue to broadcast and try to secure a long-term loan to clear its debts, Tariq said.

Nicole plus

Attachment B

Binghamton

State University of New York at Binghamton P.O. Box 6000, Binghamton, New York 13902-6000

MBA/Arts Program* School of Management Telephone (607) 777-2630 FAX (607) 777-4422



June 8, 1990

Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in my capacity as the volunteer Interim President of the Board of Directors of Uhuru Communications, operators of WUCI-FM, a not-for-profit radio station [501(c)3] in Binghamton, New York. We wish to inform you, in Informance with Section 73.1740 A4, that due to circumstances beyond our control we have temporarily discontinued operations as of June 1, 1990.

Very truly yours,

AL

Dr. Martin Schulman, Associate Professor Director, MBA in Arts Administration Program

^{*}Master of Business Administration with a specialization in Arts Administration

Attachmen+ C

Binghamton

State University of New York at Binghamton P.O. Box 6000, Binghamton, New York 13902-6000

MBA/Arts Program* School of Management Telephone (607) 777-2630 FAX (607) 777-4422



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June 22, 1990

Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in my capacity as the volunteer Interim President of the Board of Directors of Uhuru Communications, operators of WUCI-FM, a not-for-profit radio station [501(c)3] in Binghamton, New York. By our letter of June 8, 1990, we informed you that we have temporarily discontinued operations as of June 1, 200, as required under Section 73.1740(a)(4).

As we expect to be off the air for over 30 days, we respectfully request permission by a Special Temporary Authority to so remain silent.

Very truly yours,

Dr. Martin Schulman, Associate Professor Director, MBA in Arts Administration Program

^{*}Master of Business Administration with a specialization in Arts Administration

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Beverly Magnone, a secretary in the law firm of Verner, Liipfert, Bernhard, McPherson and Hand, Chartered, do hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing "PETITION TO DENY" was mailed first-class, postage prepaid, this 1st day of May, 1991 to the following:

* Roy J. Stewart, Chief
Mass Media Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 314
Washington, D.C. 20554

Alan J. Schneider, Chief Auxiliary Services Branch Federal Communications Commission 2025 M Street, N.W., Room 7310 Washington, D.C. 20554

Larry D. Eads, Chief Audio Services Division Federal Communications Commission 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 302 Washington, D.C. 20554

Dennis Williams, Chief FM Branch Mass Media Bureau Federal Communications Commission 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 322 Washington, D.C. 20554

Gladys Cordeaux President UHURU Communications, Inc. P.O. Box 1492 56 Whitney Avenue Binghamton, NY 13902

Béverly Magnone/

* Hand-Delivered